

# Opinion 2

East Valley Voice commentaries should be no longer than 650 words and should include the author's name and hometown for publication, and phone number and postal and e-mail addresses for verification.

## Fiesta District obituaries premature

As one of Mesa's eight designated employment centers, the Fiesta District's future growth should be a legitimate concern to us all. Fiesta District, combined with Mesa's other major business corridors, host about 70 percent of Mesa's total jobs, 66 percent of the city's firms, and 69 percent of citywide sales. I am a firm believer in the promise and potential of the Fiesta District.

As Mesa and the East Valley have grown, the Fiesta District has evolved, bringing new challenges and earnest efforts to invigorate and distinguish this area bordered by the Tempe Canal, U.S. 60, and Broadway and Extension roads.

The process began with buy-in from the area's major employers. Mesa also recognized the value of the district and hired consultants to conduct a study and provide recommendations to define Fiesta District.

In 2004, the report was released, offering several recommendations to guide Mesa and area stakeholders in creating a robust footprint for Fiesta's future. But are these plans working? Has the area experienced measurable results or is the party over for Fiesta District?

While it took time, all of the recommendations provided in the revitalization report are taking place. The Fiesta Mall area was redefined to include and invest in nearby commercial and residential areas. Portions of Southern Avenue were rezoned to encourage multi-family housing and office uses. A façade improvement plan is under development.

Most recently, stakeholders were presented with design guidelines that emphasized private renovations and improvements in the area. The process required a thoughtful balance between the obvious desire for growth and the reality of phasing the resources necessary to successfully implement the suggestions.

Today, the Fiesta District

### EAST VALLEY VOICE



DENNIS KAVANAUGH  
COMMENTARY

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is a hub for business, health care and retail. The synergy between Fiesta District stakeholders and Mesa Community College is strong. Six projects have reached completion within the area's boundaries since 2005 and six major projects are currently underway.

Banner Desert Medical Center is in the midst of a \$328 million expansion project that will make the medical center the largest in the state upon completion.

Southern Plaza, a mixed-use development planned for the southwest corner of Southern and Extension, will combine office space, retail and approximately 500 high-quality residential units and offer an urban lifestyle where residents can truly live, work and play.

One of the key corners in the Fiesta District is the old Fiesta Village shopping center (northwest corner of Southern Avenue and Alma School Road). That parcel now has a new owner who is willing to engage in positive discussions

with the city on redeveloping the site. I am sure you will all agree this is great news for the district.

Despite these significant strides underway, the district's biggest challenge is current perception.

Fiesta District neighborhoods are often considered undervalued, but the median value of an owner-occupied home within a 20-minute drive time of Fiesta Mall is \$248,287. The median value of an owner-occupied home within 20 minutes of Tempe Marketplace, at \$251,752, is virtually the same.

I am asked if nearby residents could support Fiesta Mall and increased retail development in the area. The average household income within a five-mile radius of Fiesta Mall is \$48,870 and slightly higher than that of Scottsdale Fashion Square, at \$47,845.

There is a distinct difference in density when comparing Fiesta Mall to other Valley centers. Fiesta is by far more highly populated within one square mile than Chandler Fashion Center, SanTan Village, Superstition Springs Center and Scottsdale Fashion Square. This density will support the Fiesta District's growing activity and encourage the community's vision of a more engaged urban environment.

Will some of the false perceptions surrounding Fiesta District ever diminish? It may take some time. Interest from current property owners to invest in the area remains strong.

Support from business owners located in the area has not faltered. The city itself is committed to improve its public infrastructure, including lighting, signage, landscaping, sidewalks and intersections.

Has the party ended for Fiesta District? On the contrary, the party has just begun. I encourage others to join the celebration.

Dennis Kavanaugh is councilman-elect for Mesa's District 3.

### DEATH NOTICES

**BENNETT,** Zachary Brian, 16, of Mesa died April 23, 2008, in Mesa. Services: 5 p.m. Sunday at Falconer Funeral Home, 251 W. Juniper Ave., Gilbert. (480) 892-9411.

**BODINE,** Virginia Maxine, 84, of Chandler died April 23, 2008, in Mesa. Allen Funeral Home handled arrangements. (480) 833-1716.

**FORMAN,** Howard Elden, 83, of Phoenix died April 16, 2008, in Cave Creek. Services: 9 a.m. Friday at National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona, 23029 N. Cave Creek Road, Phoenix. Allen Funeral Home handled arrangements. (480) 833-1716.

**HILL,** Craig D., 46, of Queen Creek died April 23, 2008, in Mesa. Mariposa Gardens handled arrangements. (480) 830-4422.

**HOUSEMAN,** Phyllis Elaine, 66, of Chandler died April 23, 2008, in Mesa. Angels Cremation & Burial handled arrangements. (480) 962-6435.

**JEFFRIES,** Harold McCray, 82, of Scottsdale died April 21, 2008, in Scottsdale. Allen Funeral Home handled arrangements. (480) 833-1716.

**KETTER,** Janet C., 61, of Gilbert died April 24, 2008, in Gilbert. Services: 10 a.m. Friday at Crossroads Nazarene Church, 2950 W. Ray Road, Chandler. Bueler Mortuary handled arrangements. (480) 963-6351.

**KETTLETY,** Robert Earl, 88, of Scottsdale died April 21, 2008, in Scottsdale. Allen Funeral Home handled arrangements. (480) 833-1716.

**NEARY,** Dorothy Mercedes, 86, of Scottsdale died April 23, 2008, in Phoenix. Services: 10:30 a.m. Monday at Messinger Mortuary Chapel, 7601 E. Indian School Road, Scottsdale. (480) 945-9521.

**PETERSEN,** James Gilbert, 72, of Casa Grande died April 18, 2008, in Casa Grande. Allen Funeral Home handled arrangements. (480) 833-1716.

**TROGLIA,** Marie Josephine, 86, of Globe died April 23, 2008, in Tempe. Services: 11 a.m. Monday at Holy Angels Roman Catholic Church, 201 S. Broad St., Globe. Miles Funeral Services Globe handled arrangements. (928) 425-5759.

### OBITUARIES

**KARLES, Irene J.**



Irene J. Karles, 79, died April 22, 2008 in Mesa, AZ. Born in Rochester, NY she moved to Mesa in 1973. She was preceded in death by her

husband of 58 years, Austin and son, Ronald. She is survived by her sister, Lyla Daniels; brother, Raymond Webb; sons: Gene and David; daughters: Patricia Connolly, Joanne Sargent and Donna Karles; 10 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren. After moving to Mesa she worked in Food Service for Mesa Public Schools until she retired.

Viewing will be 6:00-8:00 p.m., Sunday at Wyman Cremation & Burial, 115 S. Country Club Dr., Mesa and the funeral mass will be 10:00 a.m. Monday, April 28 at Christ the King Church, 1551 E. Dana Ave., Mesa, AZ.

## Kallenbach was Howard Stern regular

By MICHAEL RUBINKAM  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kenneth Keith Kallenbach, an actor, comedian and long-running member of Howard Stern's "Wack Pack," has died in custody. He was 39. Kallenbach, who was arrested in March and

# Tempe hands out reusable bags,